(e) by what time final agreement in this regard is likely to be signed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRIKAPIL SIBAL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Discussions between scientists of the two countries have been taking place to formulate a proposal on setting up of Indo-German Research Training Group on "Engineered Functional Nanocomposites". A scientific delegation from India visited Germany in April, 2004 for detailed discussions with their counterparts.

(d) and (e) Bilateral Indo-German S &T Cooperation includes both IT and Bio technology as identified priority areas. Additionally, special arrangement has been concluded by Department of Biotechnology with Germany for collaboration in the field of Biotechnology.

Centre of Excellence in Bio-Metrics

2524. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Hyderabad based Centre for DNA Finger-Printing and Diagnostics, the Andhra Pradesh Government and SUN-Microsystems, a computer hardware manufacturer, have signed a Memorandum under which a Centre of Excellence in Bio-Metrics is to be set up in Hyderabad;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of benefits of such a Centre; and

(d) whether Government would assure of completing the project within a specified short period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Centre for DNA Finger-printing and Diagnostics (CDFD), Government of Andhra Pradesh and SUN Microsystem have signed an MoU.

(b) The proposed SUN Centre of Excellence (CoE), which will be set up at the new CDFD Complex, is in Medical Bioinformatics and not in Bio-metrics. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on 11th February, 2004 by the SUN-Microsystem, Government of Andhra Pradesh and the Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics. The

projected cost of the entire CoE is about $ 4.5 million (US) of which CDFD and the State Government of Andhra Pradesh (together known as CDFD consortium) is expected to bear $1.3 million (US) and the rest of the cost is to be provided by SUN-Microsystem as a grant from its Global Education Research Fund.

(c) The benefits of such a Centre in Medical Bioinformatics would include: disease forecasting and epidemiology, diagnostics in healthcare, national database of genetic disorders, providing services to the scientists in the country, creation of trained manpower.

(d) The establishment of the CoE is expected to be completed in January, 2005.

Privatisation of JNPT

2525. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that trade unions have protested for privatising for profit making PSU- Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust, Mumbai;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the total turnout of this PSU?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Considering the dwindling traffic in bulk commodities and the potential for increased container traffic at Jawaharlal Nehru Port, a decision was taken to redevelop the existing Bulk Terminal in the port into a container terminal on Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) basis. There were protests by trade unions against the plan to develop the container terminal on BOT basis. On 21.1.2002, the employees working in the Port Trust held a demonstration, protesting against the development of the terminal on BOT basis. In a joint letter dated 21.1.2002 addressed to Chairman, Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT), three unions, namely, Nhave Sheva Bunder Kamgar Sanghathana (Antargat), Nhava Sheva Port & General Workers Union, and Transport and Dock Workers Union, while expressing apprehension about the future of the employees, their job security and service conditions and opposing the redevelopment of the bulk terminal on BOT basis, put forth various demands.